

"Blackwater"

Pilot: Judd

By

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FADE IN:

EXT. SWAMP - DAY

It's hot. Stale. The chittering buzz of locusts and mosquitoes fills the bayou with the bustling sounds of wildlife. Overgrown trees with sagging branches slump into the black water. The rusted roof of a forgotten old pickup truck sits off in the corner of the still swamp.

A small wake begins to lap at its side view mirror as a boat engine PURRS in the distance.

EXT. SWAMP OPENING - CONT.

A green flat bottom boat careens down the narrowing waterway, carrying with it two young teenaged boys. SAM, 13, light brown skin and green eyes, pilots the small boat from the back. JUDD, 13, shaggy brown hair, sits at the front, squinting toward the horizon.

The boat slows as Sam idles the engine and nears the sunken truck.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

A small congregation does their best to fill the pews of the tiny church. A neutral-colored casket adorned with sparse flower arrangements are displayed rather pitifully at the front. The crowd looks hot and irritated.

RUTH, 50s, long brown hair, small frame, stands impatiently in the entryway. She checks her watch.

Just then, ABNER, early 40s, dirty blonde hair, walks in the front door. What is probably his only button-up shirt is noticeably wrinkled.

RUTH

It's about time you boys showed up.

Ruth looks behind Abner and notices nobody is following him.

RUTH (CONT)

You're kidding, right? Where are they?

Abner shrugs.

ABNER

I'm sure they're on their way.

EXT. SWAMP - DAY

Judd hoists himself out of the boat and into the muddy water. He slishes toward the passenger door of the truck and climbs in through the window. Sam seems to pick up in the middle of a conversation.

SAM

Funerals freak me out. There's always a bunch of old people there lookin' at the casket like they're about to be next--make sure you check the floorboards.

Judd continues sloshing his hands around in the muddy water of the truck's cab while his legs flail above the surface of the swamp.

SAM (CONT)

And they always say the weirdest shit. Like-

Judd submerges his head into the water. Sam continues talking, apparently to no one in particular, now doing an impression of an old woman.

SAM (CONT)

"Oh, when you were a baby, I used to change your diapers!"

Sam shudders and switches back to his normal voice.

SAM (CONT)

So, you're basically telling me you've seen me naked AND touched my junk? Who says something like that to a kid?

Judd lifts his head out of the water. Sam looks at his watch and his eyes widen.

SAM (CONT)

Aw, shit.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

PIANO MUSIC fills the small chapel while the congregation begins to WHISPER amongst themselves. Abner sighs and makes his way over to Ruth.

ABNER

Let's just go ahead and get this thing rolling.

Ruth's eyes narrow.

RUTH  
This...thing?

ABNER  
Yeah, this thing. This show. The funeral--whatever the hell you want to call it. Let's get a move on.

Abner gestures to the congregation.

ABNER (CONT)  
I'm sure most of these people would rather be somewhere else.

Ruth's jaw drops and eyes Abner with disdain. She hisses at him in a hushed tone.

RUTH  
Do you not think it would be appropriate to wait for the child of the deceased to arrive? Have you no respect for the dead? It would be a terrible injustice to that woman if we were to send her off without her only baby having a chance to say goodbye!

ABNER  
Injustice?

Abner scoffs. He whispers back.

ABNER (CONT)  
Did you even know Carol?

Abner looks to Ruth, waiting for an answer he knows isn't coming. He gestures towards the casket.

ABNER (CONT)  
That woman fought for the better part of six years. Six. Years. In and out of remission. Constantly gaining and losing hope.

Ruth inches closer towards him.

RUTH  
(Interrupting)  
All the more reason for him to say goodbye to her in front of God and the community!

ABNER  
FUCK the community!

Abner is no longer whispering. The crowd inside the church has stopped chattering amongst themselves and has begun watching Abner and Ruth.

ABNER (CONT)  
Carol didn't believe in any of this. You'd never see her in here, except to attend the funeral of some sorry old shit-

Abner looks to the congregation.

ABNER (CONT)  
No offense.

He turns back to Ruth.

ABNER (CONT)  
But she didn't give a damn about any of this. Not one. You want to talk about injustice? Let's do it.

The piano music has stopped.

ABNER (CONT)  
For as long as that boy's been making memories, he's never known his father and only known his mother to be dying. You think he hasn't said goodbye to her a million times already? Goodbye happened a long time ago. Injustice isn't showing up late to his mother's funeral-- Injustice is what that boy has lived every day!

You could hear a pin drop in the room. A larger woman in the back fans herself nervously. Another covers her mouth in awe.

ABNER (CONT)  
What he really needs right now is to pick up the pieces as best as he can without some judgmental cunt telling him how he should be living his life.

The congregation GASPS as Abner snaps out of his rage-fueled monologue. Ruth is seething.

She opens her mouth to respond but is interrupted by the CREAKING sound of the church doors opening as Sam and Judd barge into the chapel.

Muddy water drips off of Judd and onto the church carpet below.

INSERT: TITLE SEQUENCE

FADE IN:

INT. ABNER'S KITCHEN - MORNING

The low light of the morning sun pierces through the blinds as Abner struggles to open the door into the kitchen. Both hands are loaded with grocery bags full of cereal boxes. He jiggles the handle. Locked. Abner fumbles about trying to reach into his pocket to get his keys without setting the bags down.

From the window, Sam stands in his leopard-print, silk kimono and watches his father struggle for a bit. Abner sees Sam through the window and calls out.

ABNER

No, it's okay. I got it. I clearly have this.

Abner drops the bags and glares at Sam through the window. Sam slowly walks over to the door and opens it.

ABNER

What's your deal, man. Who raised you?

SAM

You did, dummy.

Abner hugs Sam.

ABNER

Morning! How're you doing? Sleep okay?

Sam yawns.

SAM

Yeah, I-

ABNER

(interrupting)

That's great, son, now help me pick up all this fuckin' cereal.

Sam looks down to what appears to be about 15 boxes of different types of cereal.

SAM

Did you get enough? You know  
neither of us really eat breakfast,  
right?

Abner and Sam begin to stack the boxes of cereal up and carry them to the counter.

ABNER

I know we don't, but I'm sure Judd  
does.

Judd walks into the kitchen with a confused look on his face.

ABNER (CONT)

Morning! You like breakfast, right?

Judd shrugs.

JUDD

What's with all the cereal?

SAM

Dad forgot that there are other  
types of breakfast.

ABNER

You're lucky I never had any more  
kids.

SAM

Yup.

ABNER

When I was growing up we could only  
get one box of cereal.

Sam rolls his eyes. Abner continues, unphased.

ABNER (CONT)

Not one box each. One box total.  
For 5 boys.

SAM

I knew it was bad back in the olden  
days, but I didn't realize it was  
*one box of cereal* bad.

ABNER

The olden days? How old do you think I am?

Sam shrugs.

ABNER (CONT)

Anyways, It was a big pain in the ass trying to agree on anything. Let alone cereal. And I never got to pick.

He crumples up the grocery bags and throws them in the trash.

ABNER (CONT)

Turns out I don't even really know much about cereal because of that... so I just got them all.

Abner gestures to the various boxes on the counter, proudly smiling at the large selection.

ABNER (CONT)

So, what will it be, my man? We got it all. Rice Krispies, Sugar Smacks, Lucky Charms-

Abner holds up a box and raises an eyebrow.

ABNER (CONT)

Grape Nuts? God. Why on Earth would I get Grape Nuts...?

Judd looks at the different boxes and picks Froot Loops.

ABNER (CONT)

Froot Loops! A wise choice! Coming right up.

Abner grabs a bowl from the cupboard and a spoon from the drawer.

SAM

Oh yeah, I forgot to tell you.

Abner opens the fridge.

SAM (CONT)

We're out of milk.



ABNER

Aw, shit.

Judd smirks as he gets up from his seat.

JUDD

It's fine, I've gotta meet Leta anyway.

Sam sludges towards the hallway.

SAM

...I'm going back to sleep.

EXT. JUDD'S HOUSE - LATE MORNING

Grey clouds fill the sky. A white utility van is parked in the driveway of the small home. Judd stands in the yard with his bike, quietly watching as two large men wheel out a hospital bed through the front door.

LETA, 60s, African-American, large build follows the men while barking orders. She's wearing scrubs.

LETA

Y'all be careful with that bed! I saw you hit that wall, Elroy. Don't act like you didn't!

She looks across the yard, sees Judd on his bike, and smiles.

LETA

Judd! Come on in, sweetheart! Oh, what am I saying- inviting you to your own house.

Judd drops his bike in the yard and walks up to the porch.

INT. JUDD'S LIVING ROOM - LATE MORNING

Judd slowly enters the dark home. He looks around at what once was his living room. All of the furniture is now draped in plastic. He furrows his brow as he scans this seemingly unfamiliar place. Leta notices the confused look on Judd's face.

LETA

I know it looks like a haunted house in here. But, I figured I'd cover some of your mother's- Well...your things.

The movers pass by with some hospital equipment and one of them bumps into the wall. Leta furiously turns to face them.

LETA (CONT)

ELROY, I swear to God! If I see you ding this boy's walls again..

She turns back around to face Judd and has completely switched moods.

LETA (CONT)

Sorry, baby. These guys are about as useful as an ass on an elbow.

Elroy stops moving and glares at Leta. She looks back and snaps at him.

LETA (CONT)

Oh, what. Did I hurt your feelings, Elroy? I know you're hurrying so you can rush out of here and stalk your ex-girlfriend at work again. Yeah. Don't act like you don't know what I'm talking about. Pervert.

Elroy and the other mover continue working. Leta once again turns back toward Judd.

LETA (CONT)

Can't get good help anywhere.

A beat. Leta bends down and grabs an empty cardboard box.

JUDD

Am I allowed to come back?

Leta frowns.

LETA

Of course you are, dear. This is your house, after all. You just can't get the keys until you're grown.

Judd lowers his head and Leta places a comforting hand on his shoulder. She leans in close.

LETA (CONT)

Anytime you want to come back here, you just let me know. I'll let you in.

Judd nods.

LETA (CONT)

Now go get your things while I  
finish packing up the kitchen.

INT. JUDD'S HALLWAY - CONT.

Judd slowly makes his way towards the end of the hallway. He looks through the open door on the right, and then solemnly glances to the closed door on the left. He cautiously approaches.

CUT TO:

INT. CAROL'S ROOM - FLASHBACK

The mechanical hum of medical equipment churns in the small room. CAROL, late 40's, weak, small sunken build, lays in a hospital bed. Judd lays with her. She hums to him while stroking his hair.

LETA (OS)

Judd?

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - CONT.

Judd breaks his gaze and looks back towards Leta.

LETA

Did you want to grab anything from  
her room?

Judd pulls his hand back from the door and shakes his head.

JUDD

I'm fine.

Judd quietly exhales, shaken.

INT. KITCHEN - LATE MORNING

Leta sits in a wooden chair in front of the open refrigerator with a black trash bag in her hand. She thoroughly inspects each item before tossing them in the bag.

Judd emerges from the hallway with a full box of clothes. He looks at Leta before placing the box down on the floor and walking to her.

He reaches beside her and grabs a half-full gallon of milk, placing it on top of his box.

LETA

Boy. Of all the things you grab out  
of here...the milk? Is it even  
still good?

Judd checks the date and nods. He gestures to the box of  
garbage bags by Leta's feet.

JUDD

Can I borrow a few of those?

Leta looks at Judd, concern written all over her face.

LETA

Is Abner taking care of you? That  
boy has food for you, right?

Judd laughs.

JUDD

Plenty. Just need these for a  
project me and Sam are working on.

Judd pulls a handful of bags from the box and stuffs them in  
his pocket.

He walks towards the front door before giving the home one  
final nostalgic glance.

Leta calls out to Judd right as he turns to leave.

LETA

Hey Judd?

Judd stops and turns to Leta.

JUDD

Yes, Ma'am?

LETA

How about I just forget to grab the  
spare key under the doormat? Deal?

Judd smirks and nods.

JUDD

Deal.

EXT. SWAMP SHORE - DAY

Steam rises from the muggy swamp, and the shore is flush with vegetation. The clouds above grow dark. An old rotten dock slumps into the black water where the green flat bottom boat is tied.

Sam and Judd ride their bikes into view. Judd clenches the trash bags at his side.

EXT. SWAMP WATERWAY - DAY

The boys careen down the waterway as the clouds begin to thicken on the horizon. A crane flies off in the distance.

EXT. SWAMP - DAY

Sam kills the engine as the flat bottom boat glides quietly to the rusted old truck.

JUDD

You sure we gotta do this?

Sam nods enthusiastically.

SAM

Of course. What do you mean? This whole thing was your idea!

Sam slides off the side of the boat and into the water. He turns and looks at Judd for a beat. Judd begrudgingly descends out of the boat and into the water as well.

JUDD

I know, but now that we're here- it just seems so...wrong. I mean, we could have at least brought some gloves.

Sam shimmies through the open passenger window.

SAM

Do you really want to go all the way back home just for some gloves? Quit being a pussy and just hold the bag. I'll load it up.

JUDD

But, aren't we supposed to leave the scene intact? Isn't that what they do in the movies?

Sam wipes his brow and smudges dirty black water across his forehead. He begins fishing around in the water again.

SAM

This isn't the movies. And judging by the looks of it, this guy has been out here for a long time. Oh!-

Sam excitedly pulls something out of the water. He begins to wash away some of the muck and mud from it. It's a finger bone.

SAM

Dude! Look here! You think this is his dick bone?

Sam holds the finger bone up to his crotch area and thrusts around.

SAM

Looks pretty big to me.

Sam laughs. Judd rolls his eyes.

JUDD

Tell me you know that's not how that works.

Sam squints at Judd while trying to figure out what he means.

SAM

...Then why do they call it a boner?

Judd snatches the finger bone and holds it up to his own hand to compare. He wiggles his fingers around.

JUDD

See? Look. A finger, dumbass.

Judd sighs and chucks the finger bone inside of the bag. Sam continues fishing around the floorboard of the car. His eyes widen.

SAM

Dude.

Sam slowly lifts his hands out of the water revealing a human skull. Muddy sediment drips from the eye socket and the boys both convulse in disgust.

SAM (CONT)

It's about damn time we found this bad boy!

JUDD

Who do you think he was?

Judd holds open the bag and Sam drops the skull inside. He continues to pull one nondescript bone after another and places them in the bag. He shakes his head.

SAM

No idea. Probably drove out here to kill himself or something.

A dull roar of thunder rolls in the distance. Judd pokes his head out of the truck window and looks to the sky.

JUDD

We should probably get out of here soon.

SAM

Judd.

Judd sighs.

JUDD

I'm just saying-

SAM

(Interrupting)

JUDD! Look!

Judd lowers his head back into the truck. Sam's eyes grow large as he slowly lifts the second skull out of the water.

Unlike the first, the second skull has a large hole in the cranium. Rain begins to splash the surface of the swamp.

EXT. SWAMP SHORE - DAY

The rain is now coming down in sheets as the boys make their way off of the boat and onto the dock. Judd carries the black trash bag with him ashore.

The two raise their voices to be heard over the rain.

JUDD

What should we do with them?

Sam looks around the area and shrugs.

SAM

Let's just take them home.

Judd raises his eyebrows.

JUDD

Do you just huff paint all day when I'm not around? What if your dad finds them?

SAM

My dad doesn't even really know where he is most of the time, do you think he's going to be snooping around for human bones?

Judd looks around the area and notices an abandoned and overturned boat in the nearby weeds. He walks over to the boat and tries, unsuccessfully, to lift it.

JUDD

Here. Can you help me?

Sam runs over and helps him lift. Judd tosses the bag under and the two boys drop the boat and head to their bikes.

EXT. SOCIAL SERVICES OFFICE - DAY

Rain pounds the pavement as Abner pulls his truck up to the parking spot. He opens the door and dashes towards the front of the building.

INT. SOCIAL SERVICES HALLWAY - DAY

Abner stands at a bulletin board full of motivational posters. He dries himself with a handful of napkins.

Just then, JOHN, middle-aged, slightly overweight in slacks, rounds the corner.

JOHN

Mr. Wilson.

Abner turns around and smiles. He shakes John's hand.

JOHN (CONT)

Rain's something else, isn't it?

Abner laughs.

JOHN (CONT)

Why don't you come on back?

Abner nods and follows John down the hall.



INT. JOHN'S OFFICE - DAY

John sits at his cluttered desk. He's holding an open case file. He hands Abner, who's sitting opposite him, a piece of paper.

JOHN  
So with that signature there,  
you'll authorize us to go ahead and  
perform your background check, and  
home study.

Abner looks at him, confused.

ABNER  
Another one?

John nods.

JOHN  
The first check was statewide, but-  
John stops himself. He clears his throat.

JOHN (CONT)  
We've had a complaint filed against  
you by an internal member of the  
department.

Abner frowns and sits back in his seat.

ABNER  
What? Who?

John shakes his head.

JOHN  
It was anonymous, but even if I  
knew who it was, you know I  
couldn't tell you.

Abner sighs. He stumbles over his words.

ABNER  
So w- what does this mean? Is he  
gonna have to go into foster care?

John speaks in a slow and assuring tone.

JOHN  
Not at all. This is nothing to  
worry about.

Abner looks out of the window.

JOHN (CONT)

Carol made it quite clear in her last wishes that you were granted sole custody of Judd in the event of her passing. This complaint should only be a hiccup.

A beat.

ABNER

So, what now?

John closes his file.

JOHN

There's going to be a final home study with a member of our team sometime this week.

ABNER

Why not you?

JOHN

With complaints like these, the study has to be conducted by a third party. Someone removed from you and the situation.

Abner rubs his temples.

JOHN (CONT)

We'll be reaching out to schedule the visit soon.

INT. JUDD'S HOUSE - EVENING

The evening is setting in as the summer swell finally begins to lighten. Judd and Sam enter through the front door. Judd pockets the spare key left under the doormat. He takes his muddy shoes off at the entrance. Sam barrels into the kitchen, tracking mud with him.

JUDD

Hey! What are you doing?

SAM

I'm hungry.

Judd angrily motions toward the mud tracks following Sam.

JUDD

You're makin' a damn mess. Take your shoes off!

SAM

What? It's not like we have to clean up anymore.

JUDD

Just because my mom...

Judd can't seem to bring himself to say the words out loud. He backtracks and starts over.

JUDD

Just because the house is mine now doesn't mean that you can get it all dirty with your nasty swamp mud. I don't know if you remember this but we were swimming in dead guy soup earlier.

SAM

*Guys*. Dead *guys* soup. As in, more than one.

JUDD

I know what it means, Sam!

SAM

Well, are we gonna talk about it?

JUDD

What is there to talk about?

SAM

What do you mean "what is there to talk about"? There's plenty to talk about! Like how the dude we thought offed himself in the swamp was probably MURDERED with someone else and *put there*.

JUDD

And just what do you think we should do about it? We can't go to the police, we've been all over that crime scene.

Judd's face lights us as an idea pops into his head.

JUDD (CONT)

Who's property is it?

SAM

The junkyard guy's. I wanna say...Ronald? Roger?

JUDD  
(quietly)  
We should check his house out.

Sam isn't paying attention and keeps trying to figure out the property owner's name.

SAM  
...Reginald? It's an R. I know it's an R. My dad would know.

JUDD  
Did you hear me?

Sam snaps out of it.

SAM  
What?

JUDD  
We should check his house out.

SAM  
*What?!*

JUDD  
We said we wanted to solve his suicide ourselves and we spent the entire summer with *nothing*. Now we finally have a lead and I think we should at least look into it.

SAM  
That is the dumbest thing I've ever heard.

JUDD  
Dumber than thinking your dick has a bone in it?

Sam doesn't say anything.

JUDD  
We'll just go there and look around the property. No big deal. Nothing different than what we've already been doing. Just in a new place. Besides, it's night already. He's probably asleep and would never notice.

SAM  
You want to go *tonight*?

JUDD  
Come on, Sam. You're always telling me not to puss out, so here we are. You with me?

Sam thinks about it for a little bit. He sighs.

SAM  
...We're going to need some flashlights.

INT: POP'S BAR BATHROOM - NIGHT

Eli, a scruffy and unkempt man in his 30s, sits on the toilet. He's leaning forward with his head in his hands. Eli GROANS, sits up, and then looks over to the toilet paper.

ELI  
Son of a bitch.

INT: POP'S BAR - NIGHT

Eli storms out of the bathroom with the roll of toilet paper in his hands. His belt is still undone.

ELI  
Alright. Which one of you lowlifes did it?

The patrons of the bar are confused and look at one another for clues.

ELI (CONT)  
I'm the only one working today and I put this son of a bitch on myself.

One of the patrons, Randall, 30's, a big, dumb and dirty looking farmhand speaks up.

RANDALL  
What son of a bitch you talking 'bout, Eli?

Eli throws the roll of toilet paper at Randall's face.

ELI  
The toilet paper, you fuckin' ignoramus. I got here this morning and refilled the toilet paper myself. The RIGHT way.

The bar patrons are quiet with confusion.

RANDALL

The right way? Didn't realize there's a right way to put on some TP.

ELI

Yes. As with everything in the world, Randall, there's a right way and a wrong way. This morning, I put that roll on the right way. And now when I went in to take my evening shit, one of you jackalopes took the roll off and put it back on the wrong way. I just want to know which one of you did it.

The bar is quiet. Eli looks around at the few regulars suspiciously.

RANDALL

I feel like you might be blowing this a little out of proportion, Eli.

ELI

That's interesting because I FEEL that the way you keep back-sassing me, makes it kinda sound like you might be the son of a bitch that did it, Randall.

RANDALL

And what if I did? What's the big deal?

Eli scoffs.

ELI

The big deal! What is the big deal, he asks? Toss me back that roll, Randall. We're gonna have what they call a "teachable moment" here.

Randall leans down and scoops the toilet paper roll up off the floor and hands it to Eli. Eli sticks two fingers inside the roll and holds it waist-high next to where Randall is sitting.

ELI

Would you say this is an accurate estimation of where the roll would be in an actual bathroom?

Randall nods.

ELI

Good. We can agree on that at least. Now, try and tear you off a piece.

RANDALL

This roll is facing the backway. The way you said not to-

ELI

(interrupting)

If you don't pull on this roll of TP right now Randall, you and I are gonna have a problem.

Randall leans over and nervously pulls down on the roll of toilet paper. After pulling a small amount, Randall stops and places his other, noticeable dirty, hand on the bulk of the roll to gain leverage for a pull.

ELI

I know you did not just put your nasty swamp shit hand on the roll of paper you ain't going to use.

RANDALL

Ain't no shit on this hand, Eli. Just dirt.

ELI

You ever hear of conjunctivitis, Randall?

Randall is quiet while searching the far corners of his mind for a definition.

ELI

Pink eye! It's fuckin' pink eye. I'm not sure who taught you how to wipe your ass, but they failed you horribly. You're supposed to use one hand to pull off some toilet paper. That way, you take only what you need AND you don't get any of that nasty shit all over the rest of the roll and infecting everyone in my bar with god damn pink eye!

The bar is still and quietly awaiting Randall's response. In the silence, ROLAND, a hard-looking man in his early 70s, receding hairline, enters the front door and sits down at the bar.

RANDALL  
(interrupting)  
You know- I didn't even do it. I  
don't know who did. I took a dump  
at home.

Eli squints at Randall.

ELI  
Go wash your hands, you fuckin'  
animal.

Eli turns to Roland and smiles.

ELI  
Hey, dad. Need a drink? I'll try to  
keep the pink eye off of it.

ROLAND  
Not today. You been able to fix  
the bar gun?

Eli holds up the soda-dispensing bar gun and aims it at his  
father. He presses the button and water shoots out and  
splashes on to the floor. He presses another button. Water.

ELI  
Nope. No matter what button I  
press. Just water. It's great if  
you want water, though. Whiskey  
water. Tequila water. Water on the  
rocks.

Roland doesn't seem to be amused by this.

ROLAND  
I'll go and stop in with Abner and  
have him come by and fix it.

Roland turns to leave and stops by the door. Without turning  
around he begins to speak.

ROLAND  
Hey, Eli.

ELI  
Yeah?

ROLAND  
Quit fucking up my bar.

Roland exits.



EXT. LETA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A single light is on inside the small wooden home. The rain has finally parted and the bayou is alive with croaks and chirps. Abner's truck pulls up in the muddy driveway.

INT. LETA'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

MORGAN, early 70s, African-American, weathered but rugged build, sits in front of the TV. An easel at his side.

The calm soothing voice from the TV instructs Morgan's brush strokes as a KNOCK from the front door breaks his attention. He purses his lips and turns back to the TV. The KNOCKING continues. Morgan sighs.

MORGAN  
She ain't here!

Abner cracks open the front door.

ABNER  
Hello? Leta?

Morgan shakes his head, frustrated.

MORGAN  
I said, she ain't here!

Abner is now fully inside the home. He walks over to Morgan.

ABNER  
Oh, hey Morgan. Do you know when she'll be back?

He inches closer to the TV room.

ABNER (CONT)  
Whatcha doing there?

Morgan quickly covers the easel and turns the channel.

MORGAN  
Just passing the time. Leta's at the Rourke's tonight. I just come here to use the TV.

Abner leans against the doorway. He looks down at his feet and nods.

MORGAN (CONT)  
Is there something I can help you with, Abner?

Abner looks up.

ABNER  
Do you mind?

MORGAN  
Well, you've already ruined my painting so.

Abner laughs and takes a seat.

ABNER  
I don't know, I just think I fuck-  
He looks at Morgan sheepishly.

ABNER (CONT)  
I mean, *messed* up.

MORGAN  
How so?

ABNER  
I've never been great at much of anything. I was pretty shit at being a husband. I got a little better when I became a dad.

Abner stops as he remembers something painfully fond.

ABNER  
And then after a while, I was back to being a bad husband again. When Jenny left, well... I tried to make it up to Sam. Growing up without a mom is hard, I imagine. A harder thing than I've ever had to live through.

MORGAN  
No one's perfect, son.

ABNER  
When Carol started to get sick, it felt like the right thing to do. To take Judd in. They need each other. They're the only ones in the world who know what the other is going through. And I promised her. I promised that I'd take good care of her boy.

MORGAN

And you seem to be doing just that.

Abner nods.

ABNER

It was fine at first. It's still fine. I don't know. But I think I may have messed it up. I kind of... lost it at the funeral.

Morgan takes a deep breath.

MORGAN

I heard about that.

Abner's face drops.

ABNER

That's not making me feel any better, Morgan.

Morgan laughs.

MORGAN

Well, it may make you feel better to know that I happen to think she's a judgmental cunt, as well.

Abner laughs at the old man's cuss word then looks back down at the floor.

ABNER

I don't know for sure, but I think she filed a complaint against me to the CPS.

MORGAN

Wouldn't put it past her.

Abner nods.

ABNER

Since we took Judd in, the house has started to feel like a fucking home. Something I've never been able to give anybody. I'm trying to do the right thing for once, you know?

MORGAN

Trust me, Abner. I know that feeling very well.

Abner checks the clock on the wall.

ABNER

Welp, I guess i'll get out of your hair. Could you tell Leta to come over or call me when she gets a minute?

Abner heads toward the door with Morgan following close behind.

ABNER

Sorry about your painting. It looks great.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

The night is calm. An old streetlight stutters on and off nearby. Two small lights can be seen bobbing down the road as Judd and Sam quickly pedal down the middle of the street.

They veer into the now vacant lot where a building once stood. Both seem uneasy about crossing into this territory.

EXT. MOONLIGHT MOTEL - CONT.

The boys hop off their bikes and walk through the charred remains of the Moonlight Motel. Tall grass thrives through the cracks in the old foundation. The walls of the building have long since been removed, but the lines from where they once stood are clearly visible.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - NIGHT

The boys walk off the old motel property. They continue off onto a small dirt road that leads off into thick woods. Mud cakes their bike wheels as they venture down the path.

Judd and Sam halt their advance as they approach a gated entry.

JUDD

Kill your flashlight.

Judd clicks off the small mag light that he duct taped to his handlebars. Sam's handheld light shuts off and the area goes instantly black.

SAM

I can't see shit!

Judd sighs.

JUDD

Okay, turn it back on, but... just cover it with your hand or something.

With Sam's hand over the flashlight, it now emits a dull red and white light. Sam scans the gate and reveals a multitude of decrepit looking "no trespassing" signs.

Beyond the gate lies a junkyard. Old broken cars and construction equipment are scattered and stacked haphazardly throughout the area.

Sam looks over to Judd.

SAM

We don't have to do this.

Judd shakes his head.

JUDD

We're just going to take a quick look around. He's not even here.

SAM

How can you tell?

Judd turns on his flashlight and points it toward a vacant spot near the front of the house.

JUDD

That's where he parks.

SAM

And just how the hell do you know that?

Judd shrugs and gestures at the crowded area.

JUDD

You see anywhere else for him to park?

Judd walks his bike into the woods and lays it behind a tree. Sam goes off in the other direction and lays his down in some nearby weeds.

The boys follow the high chain link fence into the woods for a little bit and find a spot to climb over.

EXT. JUNKYARD - NIGHT

They drop onto an old RV that looks as though it hasn't seen the open road in decades.

The two look around in awe at the path that is carved through all of the junk.

JUDD

Jesus.

Sam uses his flashlight to scan the area.

JUDD (CONT)

And I thought *your* house was bad.

SAM

Screw you!

Judd laughs.

SAM

What is this? A maze? What are we doing? There's no way we'll find anything out here. Not to mention we don't even know what we're looking for!

JUDD

Maybe THIS is what we're looking for.

SAM

What?

Judd gestures all around at the junk.

JUDD

Look at this place. Normal people don't live like this.

SAM

Being a slob doesn't make him a murderer.

JUDD

No, Sam. *You* are a slob. This...this is something else.

Judd intently scans the visible junk with his light.

JUDD (CONT)

Look! There! Look at that truck.  
Seem familiar?

He points the light on a truck that is identical to the truck in the swamp.

SAM

Well, yeah this place is a dump.  
I'm sure there are tons of- what're  
you doing?

Judd bends over and lowers himself down to the open driver window.

SAM

Please stop. Judd. That doesn't  
mean anything!

Judd hops down from the window, and onto the ground below.  
He starts to walk down the path.

Sam sighs.

SAM

Dammit, wait!

Sam begins to climb down the RV and stumbles a bit before reaching the ground and chasing after Judd.

EXT. JUNKYARD PATH - NIGHT

The boys walk along the path that heads back toward the gate while marveling at the sheer amount of it all.

SAM

Why are we going this way?

JUDD

We were able to see the house from  
the gate. I'm not trying to get  
lost in here.

They continue walking. One of the stacks of cars GROANS in the wind. Sam quickly looks up and shines his light. Nothing. He looks back to Judd who appears unfazed.

SAM

I am never calling you a pussy ever  
again.

Judd doesn't respond. The two turn a corner and can see the house.

JUDD

There it is.

EXT. PORCH - NIGHT

The boys approach the front steps leading to a house that looks about as sturdy as the stack of cars outside. They move up the rickety old steps slowly. Dust cakes the windows.

A strange sound of shuffling sand begins to emanate from somewhere around them. Sam notices.

SAM

What is that?

Sam takes another step. The sound of RUSTLING and SCRATCHING grows louder. Sam slowly surveys the front porch with his flashlight.

JUDD

It sounds like  
something's...moving?

Sam continues to search the deck. He begins to shake. His voice cracks.

SAM

I don't think we should be here  
anymore.

Judd points to the edge of the porch.

JUDD

I think it's coming from over  
there.

The boys inch over to the source of the scratching. Tension rises in the two teens. The porch CREAKS under their weight and eventually cracks causing Sam to trip through the decrepit wooden railing of the porch and onto the ground.

JUDD

Shit! Sam, are you okay?

Sam rubs his side and points the flashlight under the deck. His voice softens as he laughs.

SAM

Awww. Judd. Come here.

The light cuts to a couple of mismatched calico kittens pawing around in the dirt underneath the porch.



SAM (CONT)  
It was just kitties!

Suddenly, security lights flash on.

The rotten corpse of the mother cat lay just behind the young kittens. Her body half decomposed, revealing a spilled set of guts and exposed ribcage. An all black kitten with a white stripe down its forehead playfully pops out from behind the carcass and joins the rest at play. Sam begins to scream again.

SAM  
Jesus Christ!!

Down the driveway path toward the entrance, two headlights pull up on the other side of the gate. Judd spots them and scrambles through the broken railing to help Sam get to his feet.

SAM  
We have to get out of here!

JUDD  
No shit. Let's go!

The two take off down one of the junkyard paths. Sam stops in his tracks.

SAM  
Wait!

Sam runs back toward the house.

JUDD  
What are you doing? Sam!

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

The shadowy figure shifts gears as he drives down the dark road to his house. He's listening to old country music. The man sees his security lights blaring.

MAN  
What the...

He pulls up to the house, grabs his shotgun and exits the truck.

EXT. JUNKYARD - NIGHT

Sam jogs back to the RV where they originally hopped over the fence. His sweatshirt is full of wriggling lumps.

SAM

Judd! Judd? Where are you?

Judd pops his head over the roof of the RV.

JUDD

Up here! Come on!

SAM

I need help!

JUDD

Just get up the same way you got down!

SAM

I can't climb with them!

Sam motions to the contents of his sweater.

JUDD

What the hell is in your shirt?!

One of the kittens pokes its head out of Sam's collar.

JUDD

Oh my god...

SAM

I couldn't just leave them there!

Judd says nothing.

SAM

Their mom is dead, Judd! Just like you. Can you have a little heart here?

From the distance, Judd spots the man walking with a flashlight and a shotgun.

He gasps and gestures to the cats.

JUDD

He's coming! Start handing them up!

Sam gets closer and starts handing the kittens to Judd, one at a time. With each kitten passed, the man gets closer to turning the corner. After all four kittens have been handed up to Judd, Sam quickly climbs up onto the RV roof as well. His foot clears the side right as the man rounds the corner.

The two boys lay on the roof of the RV while the kittens climb all over them.

MAN (OS)

Who's there?

The boys tense up. Sam tries desperately to corral the kittens. The smelly black kitten from before manages to break free, and walks itself to the corner of the roof. In a flash, the man's flashlight and shotgun points directly at it.

MAN

Damn cats...

The man clicks off his flashlight and heads back toward the house. Judd watches him round the corner and eventually go inside.

JUDD

I really hate you sometimes, you know that?

Sam sits up next to him, all four kittens climbing over him.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - NIGHT

The boys emerge from the woods, both clearly winded. Sam bends over, hands on his knees.

SAM

Holy shit!

Judd rubs sweat from his brow, breathing heavily.

SAM (CONT)

That was close, that was too damn close!

It's clear Sam's adrenaline is pumping. He's buzzing.

SAM (CONT)

Did you see the gun? He could've killed us!

Judd looks at the ground, deep in thought.

SAM (CONT)

We can NEVER come back here, Judd.  
This is too dangerous.

Sam walks over to the high grass where he left his bike.  
Judd walks to his hiding spot on the other side.

SAM (CONT)

What the?

Judd walks his bike out onto the road.

JUDD

Come on, let's go!

Sam nervously kicks around the area.

SAM

I can't find it!

JUDD

Come on, man! Stop playing.

Sam raises his voice.

SAM

Seriously! I left it right here!

Judd hops off his bike and scurries over to Sam.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Judd pedals his bike down the road. Sam stands on the pegs  
behind him, kittens in his backpack.

SAM

He took it, man! He knows we were  
there.

JUDD

Sam, we're fine. I'm sure it's out  
there somewhere. We'll go back in  
the morning when we can see better.

INT. ABNER'S KITCHEN - MORNING

Abner walks into the kitchen and pulls out a glass from the  
cabinet. He heads to the fridge and opens the door. The  
half-empty gallon of milk sits on the top shelf, with a note  
"for the old man" taped on the front. Abner laughs and  
shakes his head.

INT. SAM'S ROOM - MORNING

Judd sits on the cot along the far wall, tying his shoes. Sam lays in bed, fast asleep. Judd walks over to Sam and nudges him.

JUDD

Sam.

He nudges again, finally waking him.

SAM

Yeah. What time is it?

JUDD

Early. I'm going to meet Leta. Meet me at my house in a few hours.

Sam nods, before pulling the covers and turning over.

EXT. JUDD'S HOUSE - MORNING

Judd rides his bike up into the yard of his old home. He slowly makes his way to the front door.

INT. HALLWAY - MORNING

Off-screen, Judd opens the door, and closes it behind him. All is quiet as he slowly makes his way towards the opening of the hall.

The light sound of FOOTSTEPS can be heard as Judd walks around the corner and into view. He looks at his Mother's bedroom door.

CUT TO:

INT. CAROL'S ROOM - FLASHBACK

Judd lays his head on Carol's chest as she runs her fingers through his hair. Leta knocks quietly at the open doorway, wearing scrubs.

LETA

How are we feeling? Any pain?

Carol looks at Leta and nods silently.

LETA (CONT)

Can I get you anything?

Carol forces a smile and speaks softly.

CAROL  
Just a moment with my boy.

Leta nods.

LETA  
I'll be in the next room if you  
need me.

Carol carefully lifts her arms up behind her neck as she releases the clasp of her gold necklace. Judd lifts his head.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - MORNING

Judd reaches for his necklace and realizes it isn't there. He looks down around him nervously searching for it.

Just then, the CREAKING sound of the front door opening and closing grabs his attention. Judd stands still while looking in that direction.

JUDD  
Sam?

The house sits eerily silent as Judd listens for a response. Nothing. He holds his breath.

Judd inches slowly towards the corner of the hall. He walks closer and CREAKS a bowed part of the wood floor. Judd's eyes are fixed on what appears to be a shadow on the floor right around the corner of the hallway entrance.

His eyes widen as he inches even closer. Then, he stops. The looming shadow moves larger towards the entrance of the hall as the sound of BOOTS on the wood floor accompany it.

Judd GASPS and takes off running down the hall. He dashes in his mother's old room and slams the door.

INT. CAROL'S ROOM - CONT.

Judd covers his mouth as he attempts to contain his breathing. He sticks his ear to the door, and slowly CLICKS the lock on the doorknob.

The slow THUD of footsteps can be heard, sounding both far away and close at the same time.

After a brief moment of silence, the CREAKING sound of the front door opening can be heard, followed by the dull CLANK of it closing.

Judd turns around, his back to the door, as he slides down to the floor. He closes his eyes as he attempts to catch his breath.

EXT. JUDD'S PORCH - LATE MORNING.

Judd sits on the front porch swing, his leg nervously bobbing up and down. He looks at the road and sees Sam walking up to the yard.

JUDD  
Where have you been?

Sam walks up to the steps.

SAM  
I don't have my bike, remember? Had to walk all the way over here.

Just then, Sam looks to the side of the porch and notices his bike.

SAM (CONT)  
Wait, where'd you find it?

Sam notices the pale paranoid look on Judd's face. He gets up from the swing and looks over at Sam's bike.

Judd then looks up to Sam who is obviously shaken.

JUDD  
He was here. Just now.

Sam's eyes widen.

SAM  
What? You saw him?!

Judd shakes his head.

JUDD  
No, but he was in the house with me. Followed me in.

Sam takes a seat on the steps. He places his head in his hands

SAM  
We're so screwed.

JUDD  
I lost my necklace. It's out there, I know it.

Sam turns to Judd.

SAM  
What? We CAN'T go back there!

Judd nods, determined.

JUDD  
It's in that yard somewhere, I know  
it is.

Judd shakes his head.

JUDD (CONT)  
I can't lose that necklace, Sam.  
I'm going back out to get it.

Sam groans.

JUDD (CONT)  
With or without you.

Sam closes his eyes and shakes his head.

SAM  
...When are we going?

EXT. ABNER'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

A small car pulls into the driveway. Ruth exits, clipboard in hand. She scans over the meager yard before making her way to the door.

INT. ABNER'S ROOM - AFTERNOON

Abner stands at a mirror, buttoning his shirt. His hair is combed, clean. A KNOCKING is heard off-screen. He walks out of the room.

INT. ABNER'S HOUSE - CONT.

Abner walks through the newly cleaned living room towards the entrance. He hurriedly tucks the shirt into his jeans before opening the door. Ruth raises her eyebrows as she scans Abner, and then the room.

RUTH  
Mr. Wilson.

Abner shakes her hand and forces a smile.



ABNER  
Good to see you.

INT. ABNER'S KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

Abner and Ruth sit adjacent at the kitchen table. Ruth picks up her clipboard.

RUTH  
We've known each other for a long while.

Abner nods and nervously smiles.

ABNER  
Small towns...

Ruth nods.

RUTH  
But these are all standard questions. Just answer honestly, and we'll be done in no time.

Abner nods and draws an "X" over his heart with his finger.

ABNER  
Cross my heart.

Ruth ignores this and looks to her clipboard.

RUTH  
What is your present relationship with your parents, siblings, and extended family members?

ABNER  
Well, my folks are gone now, but I've got a great relationship with my older brothers.

Ruth jots down some notes.

RUTH  
What do you consider your strengths as a parent?

Abner smiles.

ABNER  
I like to see myself as not only a parent, but a friend. I know how kids are at this age, and I just  
(MORE)

ABNER (cont'd)  
want them to know they can come to  
me with anything.

Ruth studies Abner. She jots down more notes.

RUTH  
Have you ever been convicted of a  
crime?

Abner sits for a moment. Ruth sternly looks at him.

ABNER  
...No.

Ruth raises her finger.

RUTH  
Remember. Answer honestly.

Abner fakes a smile.

RUTH (CONT)  
(sarcastically)  
"Small towns."

ABNER  
I've been arrested a time or two,  
but I've never been convicted of  
any crime.

Ruth SIGHS, and looks down to her clipboard. Abner fidgets  
in his seat.

RUTH  
...Did you have your son out of  
wedlock?

Abner turns his head.

ABNER  
What does that have to do with  
anything?

Ruth calmly looks up from her clipboard.

RUTH  
Please answer the question, Mr.  
Wilson.

ABNER  
...Yes.

Ruth sizes him up.

RUTH  
Where is your wife now?

Abner sets his jaw.

ABNER  
Gone.

RUTH  
Do you believe her actions prior to  
her leaving were warranted?

Abner breathes deeply.

ABNER  
No.

RUTH  
Do you blame yourself for her  
infidelity?

Abner's lip shakes. He squints and looks at Ruth.

ABNER  
What does this have to do with  
Judd?

Ruth sternly answers.

RUTH  
It has everything to do with Judd.

She gestures to his clothing.

RUTH (CONT)  
One day of cleaning up, and looking  
somewhat responsible doesn't make  
you a good Father. I know who you  
really are.

Abner looks at the table.

ABNER  
If this is about the other day at  
the funeral,

Ruth cuts him off. She speaks sternly.

RUTH  
That argument means nothing to me.

All is silent for a beat.

RUTH (CONT)  
Now, may I continue?

Abner sheepishly nods his head.

RUTH (CONT)  
Is there anything more you could've  
done to keep your wife faithful?

Abner won't look at her. His expression dulls.

ABNER  
No.

RUTH  
...interesting.

She writes on her clipboard.

RUTH (CONT)  
Do you harbor any ill feelings  
towards Judd's father?

Abner clears his throat.

ABNER  
Yes.

RUTH  
Do you think that might have an  
impact on how you treat Judd?

Abner looks at Ruth.

ABNER  
That boy is like a son to me! No  
matter what Hollis did, I would  
never do anything to hurt Judd.

Ruth looks back to her clipboard.

RUTH  
Will you ever forgive your wife?

Abner purses his lips, his eye twitches.

ABNER  
No.

INT. ABNER'S LIVING ROOM - EVENING.

Abner walks Ruth to the door. The two are silent.

RUTH

I think I got what I needed.

She turns the door handle and exits the home.

RUTH (CONT)

...We'll be in touch.

Abner stands in the doorway as he watches Ruth walk to her car. He stares motionless as she starts the engine and drives off.

Abner closes his eyes and screams before punching a hole in the living room wall.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Abner pulls his truck to a parking spot. His knuckles are bloody.

INT. POPS BAR - NIGHT

Abner enters the dimly lit bar. The neon glow of the beer signs reflects in the faces of the few patrons muddling about- playing pool, sitting alone, ordering another round.

Abner takes a seat at the bar as Eli turns around.

ELI

Damn, wasn't expecting you this fast!

ABNER

A shot, and a beer.

Eli throws a bar towel over his shoulder.

ELI

What? Are you not here to fix the bar gun? Did Dad not get ahold of you?

Abner shakes his head.

ABNER

Jameson and a Miller.

Eli sighs.

ELI

You sure you wanna do that?

Abner looks up at Eli. Eli raises his hands.

ELI (CONT)

Sorry for asking.

He reaches behind the bar and grabs a bottle of whiskey.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Judd and Sam pedal down the road, passing Judd's old home. Sam stops Judd on his bike.

SAM

Are you sure it's not in your house  
somewhere?

Judd shakes his head.

JUDD

I ripped my shirt on his porch last  
night, I know it's there.

Sam sighs.

SAM

Judd, he definitely knows about us.  
I don't think we should do this.  
Let's just tell my dad and he can  
get it for us or something.

Judd thinks for a minute and then shakes his head.

JUDD

I'm going out there.

Sam hops on his bike and begrudgingly follows Judd back down the road.

INT. CAROL'S ROOM - FLASHBACK

The rhythmic HUM of the oxygen machine churns in the background. Carol lays in bed, Judd at her side.

She holds the golden cross necklace in front of them. Carol kisses Judd's forehead and smiles.

CAROL

My boy, my life's work.

She lays quiet for a beat.

CAROL (CONT)

I'm sorry that this is all I could give you.

She runs her fingers through his hair.

CAROL (CONT)

We had big plans for this world. It wasn't supposed to be like this.

She smiles.

CAROL (CONT)

It hurts that you don't have any memories of him. I'm sorry for that. I know people in town talk. He was a good man- complicated. But, a good man deep down.

Carol looks up at the ceiling as she imagines.

CAROL (CONT)

You're a lot like him- the best parts of him. Brave. Strong. He took his demons on. They won in the end. But, he was never scared.

Smiling, she wipes away a tear.

CAROL (CONT)

The world will fill you up real heavy with all the expectations and pain and doubt that a person can take. It'll make you feel so weak-weaker than I am right now.

Carol watches as the golden cross sways back in forth in the gentle breeze.

CAROL (CONT)

Do you want to know the secret?

Carol stops to find her breath. Judd snuffles.

CAROL (CONT)

It's all a joke. All of it. And the punchline is that when things are going well, and you're feeling like you're sure of where you're going- things are eventually going to get hard.

Carol coughs.

CAROL (CONT)

It goes the other way, too. Good  
will go bad. Bad will become good.  
And round and round it goes.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - NIGHT

The boys make their way around the back fence of the  
junkyard again. They begin climbing.

EXT. PORCH - NIGHT

The full moon illuminates the area with pale blue light.  
Judd and Sam cross delicately down the path toward the porch  
steps.

A dark figure emerges and catches Sam's attention. He stares  
in horror as the figure steps out of the shadow and reveals  
himself. Roland. Sam screams.

SAM

Judd!

Roland flashes a light on the boys and grabs Sam by the  
collar. He pushes Judd off of the porch into a puddle of  
mud. The old man speaks through gritted teeth and with the  
intensity of a provoked animal.

ROLAND

What are you doing here?

Sam is terrified and flinches at the words of the angry man.  
Judd rises from the mud. Roland doesn't notice.

SAM

(stuttering)

W-we were just looking for his  
necklace.

ROLAND

You broke my porch.

Without thinking, Judd reaches for a jagged piece of rebar  
on the ground.

ROLAND (CONT)

And stole my kit-

In one surprisingly powerful motion, Judd strikes Roland  
down with the heavy piece of metal across the back. The old  
man YELPS and falls to his knees in agony.



INT. CAROL'S ROOM - FLASHBACK

The oxygen machine BEEPS.

CAROL (CONT)

You know what makes the difference  
between a good life or a bad one?

Judd shakes his head. Carol pulls the cross pendant back and releases it, causing it to swing back and forth.

CAROL (CONT)

I spent most of my life thinking it  
was whether you went out on the  
upswing or the down.

JUDD

Which one are you?

CAROL

Oh, honey... I've been on the  
upswing since the day you were  
born.

Carol begins to wipe a tear from her eyes.

CAROL (CONT)

But, I think was wrong.

EXT. JUNKYARD - NIGHT

Roland struggles to regain his breath on the ground. Judd quickly makes his way closer towards the injured man as Roland attempts to get back on his feet.

Judd screams as he lifts the metal rebar above his head. Roland looks up at Judd and extends his hand right as Judd violently slams the rebar onto the top of Roland's skull.

Blood splatters across Judd's cheek. Sam screams in horror.

INT. CAROL'S ROOM - FLASHBACK

Carol shakes her head as the cross sways.

CAROL

Upswing. Downswing. It doesn't make  
a difference.

The pace of the swinging pendant slows and eventually stops.

CAROL (CONT)

Good or bad. Rich or poor. We all  
end up right here. In the middle.

The cross pendant sits calmly in the center. Carol lowers the necklace, exhales, and kisses Judd's cheek. He wipes the kiss off playfully.

EXT. JUNKYARD - NIGHT

Judd stands frozen. His face petrified in a dazed state. Sam's screams are muffled in the background.

A piercing RING is all that can be heard as Judd reaches up and wipes his cheek, similar to the flashback.

Blood smeared across his face.

CUT TO BLACK.